Effective Teaching on My Mind: How Do Peer Evaluations Contribute to the Assessment of Faculty Teaching?

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North Carolina State University
What constitutes a GOOD teacher?

**FIRST DAY OF CLASS**
INTRODUCES SELF FOR 5 MINUTES THEN LETS YOU LEAVE

**NEVER GO TO CLASS**
GIVES YOU AN "A" ANYWAY.

**DOESN'T COUNT PARTICIPATION**
AS A PART OF YOUR GRADE
How Do We Document Effective Teaching?

• Student evaluations
• Peer evaluations
"Instructor evaluation day!"

I've decided to give you all A's on the homework and instead of lecturing today I've arranged a pizza party.
Student Evaluations...a mixed bag

- Construct validity
- Biasing variables
  - Grading leniency
  - Prior subject interest
  - Course workload
  - Gender
  - Physical attractiveness
  - Nonverbal communication
- Low response rates
What is the value and process of peer evaluation?

- Examination of the peer evaluation process within CALS.
- Examination of the peer evaluation process across the university.
- Examination of the peer evaluation process at other institutions.
Our Approach

- Review of the requirements for peer evaluations in the P&T process at peer institutions.

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What did we find?
Institution A

- Based on “substantial” observation.
- Provide documentation on number of times reviewed, number of reviewers, and identified criteria.
- One or two visits for each teaching year in the probationary period, preferably one visit a semester.
Institution B

- Provide two letters or reports from departmental or college peer reviewers regarding the candidate’s teaching and advising effectiveness.
**Institution C**

• Systematic peer review of teaching based on classroom visits. Should include evaluation of course syllabi, examinations, and other instructional materials, discussions of curriculum development, introduction of innovative uses of technology, special contributions to the teaching mission, and teaching awards received by candidate.

• Responsibility of the Chair to assign peer reviewers.

• Recommended that peer evaluations are conducted at least once annually.

**Evaluations done only in the months preceding review tend not to be given much credence by higher levels.**
Institution C

- Included extensive guidelines/recommendations for peer evaluation in their APT manual.
  - Best when performed early in the instructor’s contract period.
  - Having the process of peer evaluation become part of the culture of the unit is important.
  - Best performed using repeated interactions and should include more than classroom attendance and observation/evaluation.
  - Evaluation rubrics are recommended.
  - The instructor is best served through review by 2 – 3 evaluators.
Institution D

- Include a review of course documents, including instructional materials such as syllabi, bibliographies, textbooks, test questions, grading policies and procedures. Please provide the name of the person who developed the evaluation.
- Information on the number of students dropping the course and reasons for doing so (if known), is often useful.
- Departments are encouraged to report results of other effective means, such as observation by peers, for evaluating instructional performance.
**Institution E**

- Summary of reports on classroom visitations or other observations on letterhead, dates, and signed by reviewers.
- [Peer Review of Teaching Protocol](#)
**Institution F**

- Process by which an individual’s peers can evaluate a full range of teaching activities. Most usually it involves class visitation.
- Can include development of materials, advising, research collaboration, and graduate student mentoring.
- Specific means and methods should be adopted by each unit to address its own unique standards and practices.
Institution G

• Include any letters or reports generated as part of peer evaluation.
Institution H

- A summary of peer evaluations of teaching.
- Evaluation of Teaching policies
- Guide on Peer Review of Teaching
So, Where Does This Leave Us?
• How does the process of peer evaluation become part of the culture?
• Who is in charge?
• What is the best approach?
• What should be documented?
• How often should peer evaluation take place?
Future Efforts

• Continue examining the process of peer evaluation across departments, the university, and other institutions.
• Collection of peer review forms.
• Consideration of the peer evaluation of distance education courses.
I would love to talk with you about peer evaluation at your institutions!

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